

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 OES-05 OMB-01 INT-05 TRSE-00

CIEP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 /053 W

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R 191321Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO MR. F.C. OSMENT, PRESIDENT

AMOCO INTERNATIONAL

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

TELEX: 025-3731

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4311

USDOC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 3182

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, SY

SUBJ: AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN SYRIAN PETROLEUM EXPLORATION

DEAR MR. OSMENT:

1. SINCE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN SYRIA AND THE UNITED STATES A YEAR AGO, SYRIAN OFFICIALS AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS, INCLUDING PRESIDENT HAFEZ AL-ASAD, HAVE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED US TO INFORM AMERICAN OIL COMPANIES OF THE OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY THE BURGEONING SYRIAN PETROLEUM SECTOR.

2. THE CURRENT SYRIAN BUDGET AND THE FORTHCOMING FOURTH FIVE YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN (1976-80) PUT HEAVY EMPHASIS ON EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SYRIA'S OIL RESERVES, THE MAJOR ECONOMIC MAINSTAY OF THIS COUNTRY'S RAPIDLY EXPANDING AND MORE LIBERAL ECONOMY. AS YOU KNOW, SYRIA HAS RECENTLY SIGNED THREE NEW AGREEMENTS FOR PETROLEUM EXPLORATION, ONE WITH THE U.S. FIRM TRIPCO.

3. OTHER AMERICAN COMPANIES HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING CONCESSION  
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POSSIBILITIES WITH DR. ADNAN MUSTAFA, MINISTER OF PETROLEUM

AND MINERAL RESOURCES AND OFFICIALS OF HIS MINISTRY. I UNDERSTAND THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF AMOCO HAVE ALSO VISITED DAMASCUS IN RECENT WEEKS BUT IT HAS NOT YET BEEN MY PLEASURE TO MEET THEM. I AM CABLING YOU DIRECTLY REGARDING AMOCO'S INTEREST IN WORKING IN SYRIA AS PRESIDENT ASAD HAS MENTIONED YOUR COMPANY TO ME PERSONALLY. HE AND MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM OFFICIALS GIVE EVERY INDICATION OF THEIR INTEREST IN HAVING AMOCO WORK IN SYRIA. HOWEVER, THEY CLAIM THAT AMOCO IS REQUESTING TWICE THE FINANCIAL BENEFITS CONTAINED IN THE RECENTLY SIGNED TRIPCO AGREEMENT AND TWICE THE BENEFITS PAID TO FOREIGN OIL COMPANIES OPERATING IN EGYPT.

4. I REALIZE THERE ARE COMPLEX ECONOMIC FACTORS THAT DETERMINE AN OIL COMPANY'S POSITION ON SUCH MATTERS, BUT SINCE THE PRESIDENT HAS BROUGHT THIS TO MY ATTENTION, I BELIEVE IT IS MY DUTY TO INFORM YOU. SHOULD YOU YOURSELF DECIDE TO COME HERE TO REVIEW THIS BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY, I KNOW FROM THE VISITS HERE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS OF U.S. FIRMS THAT YOU WOULD RECEIVE A VERY WARM WELCOME FROM THE SYRIANS. MY STAFF AND I STAND READY TO ASSIST YOU IN ANY WAY. SINCERELY, /S/ RICHARD W. MURPHY, AMBASSADOR. MURPHY

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, PETROLEUM CONCESSIONS, INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 19 AUG 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ellisoob  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 14 FEB 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <14 FEB 2003 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <16 MAR 2004 by ellisoob>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN SYRIAN PETROLEUM EXPLORATION DEAR MR. OSMENT  
**TAGS:** ENRG, SY, US  
**To:** n/a  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006